

**PLANNING BOARD
JUNE 12, 2014
MINUTES**

Chairman Barringer called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM at the Town Hall

Members present: Barringer, Burke, Giger, Perkins, Vega and Wilson.

Member absent: Svarczkopf

ANR PLAN – CUTLER, HILL ROAD

The Board considered the Approval Not Required plan (ANR) submitted by Joseph Cutler to create one new lot on Hill Road. Surveyor Stan Dillis presented the plan on behalf of the Cutler Estate. Lot 1 with the existing house will have 43,570 SF. The remaining land, shown as Lot 2 on the plan, will have 11 acres with 4.1 acres upland area. The motion was made by Perkins, seconded by Giger, to endorse as Approval Not Required the plan entitled, "Plan of Land in Groton, Massachusetts, Prepared for the Cutler Living Trust," prepared by Ducharme and Dillis Civil Design Group, dated June 6, 2014. The motion passed with Barringer, Burke, Giger, Perkins, and Wilson in favor; Vega abstaining.

PUBLIC HEARING – SPECIAL PERMIT, CHAMBERLAINS MILL SHARED DRIVEWAY

(Member Vega stepped down because he is an abutter.)

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 40A, Sections 9 and 11, the Groton Planning Board held a public hearing to consider the application submitted by Robert Kiley, Trustee, Regulas Realty Trust, for a special permit to utilize the provisions of the Code of the Town of Groton, Chapter 218 Zoning, Section 218-23D Shared Driveways to construct a shared driveway as shown on the plan entitled, "Shared Driveway Plan – Chamberlains Mill, Lots 7, 8 & 9, Groton, Massachusetts," prepared by Ducharme & Dillis, Civil Design Group, dated May 9, 2014. The proposed shared driveway is located in the Chamberlains Mill Subdivision, 373 Lowell Road, on property owned by Regulas Realty Trust, Assessors' Map 233, Parcel 75, on the northerly side of Lowell Road and easterly side of Schoolhouse Road.

Chairman Barringer called the public hearing to order. Member Giger read the notice posted with the Town Clerk on May 20, 2014 and published in the May 23 & 30, 2014 issues of the *Groton Herald*. Attorney Robert Collins and design engineer Stan Dillis represented the applicant at the hearing.

Attorney Collins described the proposed shared driveway serving Lots 7, 8 and 9 as shown on the Chamberlains Mill definitive plan, approved by the Planning Board on April 10, 2014. The house numbers will be placed on a sign as required in Chapter 258 Street Naming and Building Numbering Regulations. The driveway meets all of the Fire Chief's requirements.

Member Perkins asked about the Shared Driveway Agreement. Attorney Collins said there will be declarations of easements and references in the deeds recorded at the Registry of Deeds.

Member Perkins asked if the driveway would be paved. Mr. Dillis said, "yes."

Member Burke asked about stormwater management structures. Mr. Dillis said they are all shown on the definitive plan.

The Board voted unanimously to close the public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING – SCENIC ROAD, SCHOOLHOUSE ROAD

(Member Vega stepped down because he is an abutter.)

In accordance with the provisions of § 184-3 of the Code of the Town of Groton, the Planning Board and Tree Warden held a public hearing to consider the application submitted by Robert Kiley, Trustee, Regulas Realty Trust, to remove a tree within the right-of-way of Schoolhouse Road at the entrance of the proposed Chamberlains Mill subdivision located on Assessors Map 233, Parcel 75.

Chairman Barringer called the public hearing to order. Member Giger read the notice posted with the Town Clerk on May 20, 2014 and published in the May 23 & 30, 2014 issues of the *Groton Herald*. Attorney Robert Collins and design engineer Stan Dillis represented the applicant at the hearing. Tree Warden Tom Delaney was present.

Attorney Collins presented the plan to remove the existing tree in the right-of-way of Schoolhouse Road at the intersection of the proposed Chamberlains Mill subdivision road. The tree is a safety hazard because it is in the traveled way of the road.

Tree Warden Tom Delaney said he did not receive any complaints or concerns.

Member Burke asked if any stone walls would be removed. Mr. Delaney said, “no.”

The Board voted unanimously to close the public hearing.

The motion was made by Burke, seconded by Wilson, to grant the permit to remove the tree as shown on the plan entitled, “Scenic Road Plan,” prepared by Ducharme and Dillis Civil Design Group, dated May 14, 2014. The motion passed with Board Members Barringer, Burke, Giger, Perkins, and Wilson and Tree Warden Tom Delaney in favor.

PRE-SUBMISSION REVIEW – CENTER FIRE STATION

The Board met with applicants Dan and Lori McElroy, Attorney Robert Collins, and design engineer Stan Dillis for a pre-submission review of the proposed changes to the former Center Fire Station located at 20 Station Avenue. The proposed use may include a produce market, café, and residential unit on the second floor.

Mr. Dillis described the preliminary changes to the site with parking in the rear of the site, one accessible parking space in front of the building, and the remainder of the parking spaces on Station Avenue. There will be a landscaped patio in front of the building.

Mr. Dillis said the rear of the site is within 200 ft of James Brook and 100 ft of the wetlands. Member Wilson stated that this is a previously disturbed site. Attorney Collins said, “yes.”

The Board agreed with the vision for the reuse of the property.

Chairman Barringer read the Board’s statement on pre-submission reviews with no binding votes. The applicant said they understood.

ANR PLAN – PREISS, MARTINS POND ROAD

The Board considered the Approval Not Required plan (ANR) submitted by Joachim and Susan Preiss to change lot lines with an adjoining land owner as noted on the plan. Jesse John of David E. Ross Associates presented the plan. There is no change to the frontage of the lots. One of the lots does not conform to area requirements and will have 19,899 SF.

Chapter 218-22F(3) states:

- (3) Such nonconforming lots may be changed in size or shape or their land area combined without losing this exemption, so long as the change does not increase the actual or potential number of buildable lots.

No new building lots are created by the ANR plan.

The motion was made by Wilson, seconded by Vega, to endorse the plan entitled, "Plan of Land in Groton, Mass. Owned by Joachim and Susan Preiss," prepared by David E. Ross Associates, dated June 9, 2014. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING (con't) – SPECIAL PERMITS, GROTON INN, 128 MAIN STREET

The Board held the continuation of the public hearing to consider the application submitted by 128 Main Street, LLC, for special permits to redevelop the Groton Inn and associated improvements to the property located at 128 Main Street.

Applicants Chris Ferris and Rich Cooper, Design Engineer Jesse Johnson of David E. Ross Associates, Landscape Architect Lorayne Black, Architect Peter Pitman of Pitman & Wardley, and Real Estate Broker John Amaral were present.

Mr. Johnson presented the revisions to the plan including providing access to all windows in the Inn for the Fire Department. The access aisle between the accessible spaces has been widened to 18 ft to provide access for the Fire Department to all windows in the Inn as requested by the Fire Department.

Other issues in the Nitsch Engineering report, such as changes to the stormwater system, have been addressed. Other changes include adding pavers for the crosswalks and reducing the grade at the driveway entrance to the site so the sidewalk crossing will be ADA compliant. The three street trees along Main Street must be removed to change the grade of the sidewalk. The Tree Warden would like to transplant the street trees, if possible.

Mr. Johnson said a new lighting plan (Sheet 9 of 12) has been submitted showing 0.5 foot candle at the entrance to the site and 0.2 foot candle at the rear property line. Bollard lighting will be used along the sidewalk at parking lot.

Mr. Johnson said the MDM traffic study was submitted as requested by the Board. The study shows that there will be fewer than 60 cars per hour at the site and that the proposed project should not cause any issues to traffic flow on Main Street.

Member Giger asked about tree removal at the site and landscaping to replace the trees. Mr. Johnson said the landscaping plan shows the trees to be planted on the site. The existing street trees on Main Street would obscure the site landscaping.

Landscape architect Lorayne Black described the plantings for the area as shown on the landscaping plan.

Member Giger asked if the lighting fixtures would be directed downward and shielded. Mr. Johnson said there would be no spill over as required in the regulations. Member Giger expressed concern about the impact of lighting on the residential units at 134 Main Street (Boynton Meadows).

Member Perkins said the photometric diagram usually shows lighting levels for the entire site. Mr. Johnson said they would review the plan and submit it to the Board. Member Barringer said the lighting should be below 0.5 foot candle at the boundaries of the site.

Member Wilson asked about the height of the light poles. Mr. Johnson said 15 ft. Ms. Black said the light poles are the same as the lights at Groton School.

Member Burke said he liked the change in traffic flow at the front entrance of the Groton Inn. He asked about the easement to connect with 134 Main Street as required in the special permit for Boynton Meadows. Mr. Johnson said the grades would not work for vehicular access, but pedestrian access is feasible. Member Burke said the Board is looking for greater connectivity between properties. He requested that the applicant explore other locations with Bob France, owner of Boynton Meadows.

Member Wilson asked if it is possible to regrade the entire site to provide access between the two properties. Mr. Johnson said, "no," because there is 7-8 ft on fill and the changes would impact the stormwater management system.

Member Perkins asked about snow removal. Mr. Johnson said the snow would be stockpiled at the edge of the parking lot as shown on the plan.

Member Giger reminded the applicant that snow must be removed when the banks are three feet high. Mr. Johnson said they understood.

Mr. Johnson asked if the Board was satisfied with the stormwater management system, noting that he had made effort to limit the amount of impervious material at the site. He said the applicant is still working with the Board of Health and a Licensed Site Professional (LSP) to remediate the soil in the rear of the property.

Town Planner Michelle Collette stated that Earth Removal Stormwater Advisory Committee and Conservation Commission both approved the stormwater management system.

Members of the Board all agreed that the applicant adequately addressed stormwater management issues.

Town Planner Michelle Collette asked about adding accessible parking space near the carriage house. Mr. Johnson said there is an accessible space at the cottage near the carriage house.

The Board agreed that it would grant a waiver to allow one less parking space to accommodate the accessible parking space near the carriage house.

Lorayne Black presented the revised landscaping plans including photographs of all the flowering trees, shade trees, shrubs, and evergreens. She described how the plantings would provide a buffer at the Boynton Meadows and Lawrence Academy property lines. She said the layout of the terrace was changed to accommodate fire truck access. Fencing is shown on the detail sheet as submitted to the Historic Districts Commission (HDC).

Ms. Black said a pedestrian connection between the Groton Inn and Boynton Meadows would be preferable to a vehicular connection. Member Giger asked other members of the Board if they were comfortable with pedestrian and bicycle access rather than vehicular access between the properties. Mr. Ferris said providing a pedestrian connection is part of the team's core values. The Board asked the applicant to provide more detail on the proposed connection.

Architect Peter Pitman showed the revised building elevations and renderings that will be presented to the HDC on June 17, 2014. Board members plan to attend the HDC's site walk and meeting on June 17, 2014.

The Board voted unanimously to continue the public hearing on June 26, 2014 at 8:30 PM.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION – SUNSET FARM, FARMERS ROW

The Board met with Bard Salmon, owner of the Sunset Farm Bed and Breakfast at 154 Farmers Row, and architect Jonathan Cocker of Mangel Associates to discuss renovating the historic barn to a function hall.

Mr. Cocker said the Salmons would like to use the barn for weddings and similar events from late spring to early fall. The barn is not heated so this would be a seasonal rather than year-round use. The occupancy would be 120-140 people standing or 80-100 at tables.

Member Burke asked how many guests rooms are in the bed and breakfast. Mr. Cocker said, "three."

Mr. Cocker said they met with the Building Commissioner and Fire Chief about zoning issues and fire sprinklers. Mr. Salmon would like to apply for a waiver and add a fire alarm system. The events would only be in the day-time, not evenings.

Member Perkins asked if there would be food, alcohol and music. Mr. Cocker said, "yes," food would be catered and not prepared at the bed and breakfast.

The Building Commissioner determined the proposed use is not allowed under current zoning. The applicant would like to work with the Board to amend the zoning by-law to allow the use. Member Burke said the Board cannot customize zoning for one specific use and location. The zoning provisions would be open to others. This proposal requires careful consideration.

Member Barringer asked about sanitary facilities. Mr. Cocker said they are in discussions with the Board of Health.

Member Giger asked if the liquor licenses would be for each individual event. The applicant would have to work with the Board of Selectmen on the liquor licenses for the facility.

The Board encouraged Mr. Salmon and Mr. Cocker to do more research on a proposed zoning amendment and to see how other towns permit similar facilities.

MILL RUN PLAZA

The Commission on Accessibility received a complaint because one of two accessible parking spaces at the North Middlesex Savings Bank had been eliminated. The accessible symbol was painted over and sign removed. Vehicles are now parking in the space and the adjacent aisle. An individual with disabilities had difficulty getting out of her vehicle in the adjoining accessible space.

The Board will request that the Building Commissioner/Zoning Enforcement Officer, work with the bank to correct the situation and replace the accessible parking space.

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette
Land Use Director/Town Planner